

Angus and Sarah L. Walton House
117 15th Street
Fourth Ward Neighborhood
Altoona
Blair County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5866

HABS
PA,
7-ALTO,
85-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ANGUS AND SARAH L. WALTON HOUSE

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Location: 117 15th Street

Date of Erection: 1890

Description: Built on a small urban lot, the Walton House, with its frame construction and mansard roof, is clearly gesturing toward a style originally intended for more elaborate and substantial houses. Mansard elaboration appears only on the front facade, creating the overall effect of a side-gambrel roof structure. The house is of frame construction rather than the brick or stone more usual for this style. Three stories high and three bays wide (with two pedimented dormer windows in the third floor), the house has its original horizontal wood siding and patterned hexagonal and square shingles on the third floor mansard front. Sawtooth applique runs between the single brackets of the cornice and lower curb, which set off each edge of the pedimented window surrounds below.

The right-hand window on the second floor front has been replaced and shortened. Unpainted plywood and latticework have recently been used to fill in the porch on the first floor. There is a central enclosed chimney.

History: Although there are several of these frame, mansard-roofed houses along this section of 15th Street, their potentially common origin has so far remained undetermined. Similar houses are also found in other parts of Altoona (see First Ward Neighborhood, HABS No. PA-5788).

Angus Walton, a machinist, purchased a 25' x 100' lot facing 15th Street from John and Emma Wright in May 1889. Walton was first taxed in 1890 for a half lot and house worth \$1,000 at 109 15th St. The address was corrected to 115 15th St. in 1892--this was likewise the number assigned the current Walton house on the 1894 Sanborn map. Walton is listed in directories at 115 17th St. during the span of his ownership.

When the house was sold to John B. Westley in April 1895, the price had risen to \$2,000. Westley, variously working in dry goods and as a farmer, did not reside here either, but lived at 971 7th Ave. By his will of 1900 the property was transferred to Mary Otto, who likewise lived elsewhere. She sold the lot with its two-story frame dwelling to Harry H. Hogemyer for \$1,800 in May 1913.

Harry H. and Mary Hogemyer did live in the house; in 1925 his occupation was listed as chief clerk. William Hayes and Glennavee Esther Palmer purchased the house from them in August 1943. While he lived here, William Palmer owned and ran Palmer's Garage. He died in 1969, and in 1973 his widow sold the property to Thomas L. and Phyllis A. Harkless. They lived here while Thomas worked as an administrative aide for the Altoona Housing Authority. In May 1978 the property was acquired by Norma A. McCaulley who kept it until 1986.

Sources: Maps: 1888, 1894. Deed books: 76/53, 105/528, 219/22, 479/7, 948/710, 1013/752, 1151/928. City directories. Tax assessment records.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), Randy Cooley, director. Overviews of the history of the city (HABS No. PA-5784) and the fourth ward neighborhood (HABS No. PA-5786) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the city and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Susan Garfinkel in the summer of 1989 under the supervision of HABS senior historian Alison K. Hoagland and Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian. Garfinkel's and other project historians' work was published as Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990), edited by Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian, and Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.